

**Worksheet**  
**Determination of NEPA Adequacy (DNA)**  
**U.S. Department of the Interior**  
**Bureau of Land Management**

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OFFICE: Northeastern States Field Office

NEPA NUMBER: DOI-BLM-ES-0030-2015-0002-DNA

CASEFILE/PROJECT NUMBER: N/A

PROPOSED ACTION TITLE/TYPE: Mount Ayr Long-Term Holding (LTH) Pasture for Excess  
Wild Horses/5-Year Lease Renewal

LOCATION/LEGAL DESCRIPTION: Ringgold County, Mount Ayr, Iowa

APPLICANT (if any): BLM selected contractor, Doyle Richards

**A. Description of the Proposed Action and any applicable mitigation measures**

The proposed action is to renew the five-year lease at the Mount Ayr, Iowa Long-Term Holding (LTH) pasture for a maximum of 400 excess wild horses (geldings) on about 1,133 acres. The LTH pasture is needed in order to provide for the long-term maintenance and humane care of excess wild horses off of public rangelands.

**B. Conformance with the Land Use Plan (LUP) and Consistency with Related Subordinate Implementation Plans**

LUP Name*	<u>N/A</u>	Date Approved	<u>N/A</u>
Other Document	<u>N/A</u>	Date Approved	<u>N/A</u>
Other Document	<u>N/A</u>	Date Approved	<u>N/A</u>

*\*List applicable LUPs (for example, resource management plans; activity, project, management, or program plans; or applicable amendments thereto)*

The proposed action is in conformance with the applicable LUPs because it is specifically provided for in the following LUP decisions:

The project area does not fall within an existing land use plan (i.e., Management Framework Plan or Resource Management Plan). In the absence of an existing land use plan and pursuant to 43 Code of Federal Regulations 1610.8, the BLM developed an environmental assessment (NEPA Number: DOI-BLM-ES-030-2009-018) to assess the impacts of the action and to provide the basis for an informed decision.

**C. Identify applicable National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) documents and other related documents that cover the proposed action.**

List by name and date all applicable NEPA documents that cover the proposed action.

- Mount Ayr Long-Term Holding Pasture for Excess Wild Horses Environmental Assessment (NEPA Number: DOI-BLM-ES-030-2009-018), Decision Record signed October 30, 2009

List by name and date other documentation relevant to the proposed action (e.g., biological assessment, biological opinion, watershed assessment, allotment evaluation, and monitoring report)

- Carrying Capacity Analysis (NRCS Production Data, found in Appendix 2 of EA), October 30, 2009

**D. NEPA Adequacy Criteria**

**1. Is the new proposed action a feature of, or essentially similar to, an alternative analyzed in the existing NEPA document(s)? Is the project within the same analysis area, or if the project location is different, are the geographic and resource conditions sufficiently similar to those analyzed in the existing NEPA document(s)? If there are differences, can you explain why they are not substantial?**

Yes. The Mount Ayr Long-Term Holding (LTH) Pasture for Excess Wild Horses EA considered the operation and maintenance of a LTH pasture for a maximum of 400 excess wild horses (geldings) by a BLM selected contractor on about 1,133 acres near Mount Ayr, Iowa. The new Proposed Action is in the same analysis area (see Map 1 in the EA) and is the same type of activity with no proposed changes to what was analyzed in the EA.

**2. Is the range of alternatives analyzed in the existing NEPA document(s) appropriate with respect to the new proposed action, given current environmental concerns, interests, and resource values?**

Yes. The EA analyzed an appropriate range of alternatives given the purpose and need for the project. Two alternatives were analyzed: (1) Proposed Action Alternative, to operate and maintain a LTH pasture for excess wild horses by a BLM selected contractor; and (2) No Action Alternative (Continue Existing Management), to continue to pasture about 500 cow/calf pairs or up to 1,100 yearling cattle year-round, but no wild horses. See EA, page 5. The selected alternative is the Proposed Action Alternative. No new environmental concerns, interests, resource values, or circumstances have been revealed since the EA was published in 2009 that would indicate a need for additional alternatives.

**3. Is the existing analysis valid in light of any new information or circumstances (such as, rangeland health standard assessment, recent endangered species listings, updated lists of BLM-sensitive species)? Can you reasonably conclude that new information and new circumstances would not substantially change the analysis of the new proposed action?**



Yes. No new information or circumstances have arisen since the EA was published in 2009 that would affect the adequacy of the analysis.

**4. Are the direct, indirect, and cumulative effects that would result from implementation of the new proposed action similar (both quantitatively and qualitatively) to those analyzed in the existing NEPA document?**

Yes. The EA discussed the relevant components of the human environment that were present and would potentially be affected by the Proposed Action and No Action Alternatives. Effects to invasive non-native species, soils and vegetation resources, threatened and endangered species, water quality, and wetland/riparian zones were analyzed.

The EA analysis included typical effects that would be expected at the site-specific level, and identified mitigation measures and monitoring requirements that would be implemented. There is no indication that implementing the new Proposed Action would result in different environmental effects than those anticipated in the EA.

**5. Are the public involvement and interagency review associated with existing NEPA document(s) adequate for the current proposed action?**

Yes. In September 2009, a scoping letter was mailed by BLM to potentially interested parties, announcing that BLM was seeking help identifying issues and concerns regarding the potential project. No comments or concerns were identified as a result of external scoping.

The BLM consulted with the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) in Mount Ayr, Iowa in September 2009 regarding the proposed LTH pasture for wild horses. The purpose for the consultation was to obtain information regarding forage production from the ranch pasture plan developed by NRCS for the property. Analysis of this information indicates the expected carrying capacity is adequate to support a maximum of 400 head of wild horses (geldings) in a pasture setting for 11 months of the year with supplemental feeding needed for about one month during the winter when snow covers the ground.

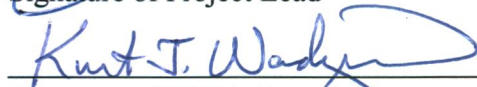
**E. Persons/Agencies/BLM Staff Consulted**

Refer to the 2009 EA for a complete list of the team members participating in the preparation of the original environmental analysis or planning documents.

## Conclusion

Based on the review documented above, I conclude that this proposal conforms to the applicable land use plan and that the NEPA documentation fully covers the proposed action and constitutes BLM's compliance with the requirements of the NEPA.

  
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Signature of Project Lead

  
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Signature of NEPA Coordinator

  
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Signature of the Responsible Official

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\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

**Note:** The signed Conclusion on this Worksheet is part of an interim step in the BLM's internal decision process and does not constitute an appealable decision. However, the lease, permit, or other authorization based on this DNA is subject to protest or appeal under 43 CFR Part 4 and the program-specific regulations.